

Message Text

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SUBJ: CHECKLIST FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS VISITORS:

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

REF: STATE A-855

1. FOLLOWING COMMENTS OR SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL POINTS ARE
KEYED TO REFAIR, NON-ESSENTIAL WORDS OMITTED.

A. PAJT I, SECTION A - BACKGROUND, P 1: SUGGEST
CHANGE FIRST LINE TO SHOW THAT "MOST," NOT ALL, COUNTRIES
BENEFITTING FROM BOOM.

P 2, BOTTOM: GOVERNMENT CANNOT, PROBABLY SHOULD
NOT, BE GIVEN TASK OF IDENTIFYING ALL SALES OPPORTUNITIES.
SUGGEST CHANGE TO "SALES OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WE IN
GOVERNMENT CAN HELP TO IDENTIFY FOR YOU."

B. SECTION B - TIMING: BUSINESS VISITORS SHOULD BE
ENCOURAGED TO AVOID TRIPS DURING RAMADAN.

C. SECTION C - LANGUAGE: KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH IS
WIDESPREAD IN MIDDLE EAST, BUT IN MAGHREB (TUNISIA TO
MOROCCO) FRENCH IS COMMERCIAL LANGUAGE, RELATIVELY FEW
SENIOR BUSINESSMEN OR BUSINESS CONTACTS HAVE NECESSARY
COMMAND OF ENGLISH TO CONDUCT SERIOUS BUSINESS. CALLING
CARDS, CORRESPONDENCE AND LITERATURE SHOULD BE IN FRENCH
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

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D. SECTION D - U.S. PRODUCTS: RELIABILITY, SPEED, AND COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION ARE KEY FACTORS WHERE U.S. FIRMS ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE RELATIVE TO EUROPEAN COMPETITORS.

FOLLOW UP: U.S. FIRMS NEED TO BE PARTICULARLY QUICK IN RESPONDING TO CORRESPONDENCE IN VIEW OF DELAYS IN MAIL SERVICE COMPARED TO EUROPE.

2. SUGGESTED TEXT FOR PART II: TUNISIA - TRADE POLICY:
TUNISIA MAINTAINS STRICT IMPORT AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROLS. MOST GOODS REQUIRE IMPORT LICENSES ACQUIRED BY THE TUNISIAN BUYERS FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY, AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE AUTHORIZATIONS FROM THE CENTRAL BANK. IMPORTS FROM A DESIGNATED LIST OF PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT LIBERALIZED AND CAN BE EFFECTED BY MEANS OF IMPORT CERTIFICATE OBTAINED BY IMPORTERS DIRECTLY FROM COMMERCIAL BANKS. TRADE AGREEMENTS AND LINES OF CREDIT FAVOR IMPORTS FROM A NUMBER OF EUROPEAN, ARAB AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES, BUT OTHERWISE THERE IS NO OVERT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GOODS OF AMERICAN ORIGIN IN NORMAL COMMERCE. IN GENERAL, US COMMERCIAL EXPORTS TO TUNISIA ARE SHOWING CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH IN SPITE OF THE WELL-ESTABLISHED TRADE TIES WITH FRANCE AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.
OTHER FACTORS - U.S. FIRMS MAY BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF EXPORTS OF MACHINERY, INDUSTRIAL RAW MATERIAL AND COMPONENTS TO TUNISIA THROUGH INVESTMENTS HERE. ALTHOUGH TUNISIAN MARKET IS SMALL, TUNISIA ENJOYS PREFERENTIAL ACCESS FOR ITS GOODS INTO THE LARGE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET AND OTHER ARAB/AFRICAN STATES. FOREIGN INVESTMENT, INCLUDING THAT FROM THE US, FOR EXPORT INDUSTRIES IS FAVORED BY SPECIAL LEGISLATION, TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMS, AND AVAILABILITY OF A RELATIVELY CHEAP AND PRODUCTIVE LABOR FORCE AND LOCAL SOURCES OF ENERGY.

3. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE 50 COPIES OF CHECKLIST WHEN PUBLISHED.
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